

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 00965 042128Z

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON YUGOSLAVIA

REF: STATE 47773

1. SUMMARY. BROWNE ARTICLE CARRIED MARCH 4 NEW YORK TIMES IS INACCURATE IN PART, FAULTY IN ANALYSIS, AND OVERALL MISLEADING. END SUMMARY.

2. OVERALL TONE OF BROWNE ARTICLE IN MARCH 4 NYT CONVEYS AN AIR OF CRISIS IN YUGOSLAVIA WHICH SIMPLY DOES NOT EXIST. IT CLEARLY HAS THE FLAVOR OF HAVING BEEN WRITTEN TO DEFEND A THESIS OR PROVE A POINT, WITH SELECTIVE EXAMPLES (SOMETIMES ERRONEOUS) CITED IN SUPPORT. THE FOLLOWING WILL ILLUSTRATE.

3. IN 2ND GRAF BROWNE SAYS DEATH OR INCAPACITY OF TITO "IS VIEWED" AS A LOOMING CRISIS. WE KNOW OF NO RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL OR OBSERVER, YUGOSLAV OR OTHERWISE, WHO WOULD USE THIS TERMINOLOGY.

4. UNDER SUBHEADING "FEW ARE YUGOSLAVS" BROWN CITES 1971 CENSUS AS PROOF OF LACK OF NATIONAL COHESION. THIS IS A FAULTY PERCEPTION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CENSUS. THE WHOLE THRUST OF POST WW II YUGOSLAVIA HAS BEEN THAT THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONALITIES WILL BE

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PAGE 02 BELGRA 00965 042128Z

PROTECTED AND THEIR DIFFERENCES MAINTAINED AND EVEN PERPETUATED

THROUGH A FEDERAL SYSTEM. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INCONSISTENT FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS TO HAVE DECLARED THEMSELVES YUGOSLAVS, ALTHOUGH THAT POSSIBILITY WAS HELD OUT FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT WANT IT. AND MOREOVER, ONE HAD TO WRITE IN YUGOSLAV AS NATIONALITY - IT WAS NOT ONE OF PRINTED CHOICES.

5. UNDER HEADING "NATIONALISTS FRICTIONS" BROWNE CITES "SOME CRITICS" AS SAYING NINE-MAN STATE PRESIDENCY WILL EMPHASIZE FRICTIONS AND CITES AN ILLUSTRATION TO SUPPORT THIS. WHAT THIS IGNORES IS WHAT ANYONE FAMILIAR WITH THE YUGOSLAV POWER STRUCTURE KNOWS, AND THAT IS THAT THE REAL LOCUS OF POWER IN POST-TITO YUGOSLAVIA WILL BE NOT IN THE STATE PRESIDENCY BUT IN THE 47-MAN PARTY PRESIDENCY WHICH INCLUDES ELEMENTS OF ALL REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND OTHER INTERESTS IN THE COUNTRY (INCLUDING THE STATE PRESIDENCY). SO, TO CITE POSSIBLE FRICTIONS IN THE STATE PRESIDENCY IS IRRELEVANT. FURTHER IN THE SAME SECTION BROWNE FLATLY STATES "THERE SEEMS CERTAIN TO BE A STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN THE POST-TITO ERA, BOTH BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND BETWEEN NATIONALITIES." WE KNOW OF NO RESPONSIBLE OBSERVER WHO WOULD SUPPORT THIS.

6. BROWNE THEN CITES "GRAVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS TAKING SHAPE NOW". WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH PROBLEMS AND DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT BROWNE HAS IN MIND. BROWNE CITES AN INFLATION RATE OF 32 PERCENT PER YEAR. THIS IS BOTH INACCURATE AND MISLEADING. THE PRESENT INFLATION RATE IS ABOUT 24 TO 25 PERCENT, AND EVEN THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN THE FRAMEWORK THAT A DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUCH AS YUGOSLAVIA COULD NORMALLY BE EXPECTED TO RUN HIGH INFLATION RATE (IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 18 PERCENT). COMPARED TO NORMAL INFLATION RATES, COST OF LIVING IN YUGOSLAVIA HAS GROWN AT SLOWER RATE THAN IN MOST WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND U.S.

7. BROWNE SAYS "THERE ARE SIGNS THAT YUGOSLAVIA MAY BE PLUNGED INTO A SEVERE DEPRESSION..." THERE ARE NO SUCH SIGNS. QUITE TO THE CONTRARY, FIGURES JUST RELEASED INDICATE THAT THE VOLUME OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION IN YUGOSLAVIA IN REAL TERMS INCREASED IN JANUARY AT THE ANNUAL RATE OF TEN PERCENT -- A GOOD PERFORMANCE IN ANYBODY'S BOOK AND RIGHT AT THE MARK YUGOSLAVIA HAS MAINTAINED FOR SOME TIME.

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PAGE 03 BELGRA 00965 042128Z

8. BROWNE SAYS YUGOSLAV WORKERS "HAVE BEEN COMING HOME BY THE TENS OF THOUSANDS" FROM WESTERN EUROPE. THIS IS FALSE. THE RETURN OF WORKERS, AFTER AN INITIAL JUMP, HAS DECLINED TO A TRICKLE, AND BOTH YUGOSLAV AND WESTERN EUROPEAN EXPERTS EXPECT THE NUMBER OF YUGOSLAV WORKERS IN THE WEST TO REMAIN STABLE AT APPROXIMATELY THE PRESENT LEVEL FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE. MOST RECENT FIGURES SHOW 25-50 THOUSAND OF 1.1 MILLION HAVE RETURNED.

9. BROWNE SAYS "SCORES OF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO PRISON IN RECENT MONTH . BY ADDING THE COMINFORMISTS OF LAST SUMMER (32) TO THE ZADAR GROUP OF LAST MONTH (15) AND THROWING IN A FEW SCATTERED OTHERS, ONE MIGHT COME TO TWO AND ONE HALF SCORE -- BUT MOST IN TWO TRIALS OF ADMITTED ANTI-REGIME ACTIVISTS. THAT PARAGRAPH THEREFORE IS HIGHLY DISTORTED AND MISLEADING. IN THE SAME PARAGRAPH HE SAYS "SOME" (PRESUMABLY OF HIS "SCORES") WERE SENTENCED "FOR MERELY HAVING WRITTEN CRITICAL ARTICLES FOR FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS". ONLY MIHAJLOV AND DJUROVIC FIT THAT DESCRIPTION TO OUR KNOWLEDGE.

10. WE DO NOT KNOW WHERE BROWNE GOT HIS GLOOMY TITO NEW YEARS STATEMENT (AVAILABLE IN THE DEPARTMENT VIA FBIS). IT WAS SO UNREMARKABLE THAT THIS EMBASSY DID NOT EVEN BOTHER TO SEND A TELEGRAM ON IT. IN IT TITO: (A) SAID THAT DETENTE AND NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE BIG POWERS WERE LIMITED IN SCOPE, BUT HE SAID NOTHING ABOUT TRUST, AS ALLEGED BY BROWN;

(B) HE REFERRED TO INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AND DANGERS "WHICH YUGOSLAVIA TOO WOULD HAVE TO FACE...IN ORDER TO SOLVE THEM", BUT SAID NOTHING ABOUT "A HARD YEAR AHEAD", AS ALLEGED BY BROWNE; AND

(C) HE SAID "PRESSURES AND VARIOUS SPECULATIONS CONCERNING ITS (YUGOSLAVIA'S) FURTHER DEVELOPMENT DID NOT CEASE" DURING THE YEAR AND THAT "THE MOUNTING CAMPAIGN IN SOME AMERICAN, AUSTRIAN AND OTHER EUROPEAN PAPERS IS THE EVIDENCE FOR THIS". HE DID NOT SINGLE OUT THE UNITED STATES "IN PARTICULAR", AS BROWNE ALLEGED.

1. WE KNOW OF NO FOUNDATION FOR THE ALLEGATION THAT THE YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS STATED "WASHINGTON...HAS BEEN WORKING AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA BY HELPING NAZI ELEMENTS IN NEIGHBORING AUSTRIA, TERRITORIALY AMBITIOUS FASCISTS IN NEIGHBORING ITALY AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 BELGRA 00965 042128Z

MILITARIST ENEMIES IN NEIGHBORING GREECE." SOME ARTICLES AT INDIVIDUAL TIMES MIGHT HAVE BEEN SO INTERPRETED, BUT THERE WAS NO FABRIC OF CHARGES SUCH AS BROWNE'S LANGUAGE IMPLIES.

12. AS FOR THE FINAL PARAGRAPH, WE ARE SURE TITO WILL BE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT HE SERVED IN THE RED ARMY AND WORKED FOR THE SOVIET UNION FOR 25 YEARS. HE WILL OF COURSE PROUDLY ADMIT TO JOINING THE RED GUARDS AT OMSK IN 1917 AFTER HE WAS FREED FROM THE PRISON HE WAS IN BECAUSE HE WAS A CAPTURED SERGEANT IN THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARMY. ONCE BACK IN YUGOSLAVIA, HOWEVER, WE FEEL CONFIDENT TITO THOUGHT HE WAS WORKING FOR YUGOSLAVIA, NOT FOR THE SOVIET UNION, AS HE AMPLY DEMONSTRATED IN 1948. TO SAY HE IS A "PRODUCT OF SOVIET POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION" IS NAIVE AND UNINFORMED.
TOON

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